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INTRODUCTION.

THE American Geographical and Statistical Society has the pleasure of presenting to its members and the public, the first number of a *JOURNAL* to be continued monthly under its auspices.

The principal object of the Society, in this undertaking, is to furnish information on Geographical and Statistical subjects, by the publication, in a form adapted to their preservation and convenient use, of the papers read before it, and of communications with which it may be favored; to cultivate and cherish a taste for research in the wide field of Geography and Statistics; and to create among its members an interest that will secure their hearty co-operation in the promotion of its objects. In the absence, both in the Federal and State Governments, of bureaus specially devoted to these subjects, a work similar in character to the one now presented seems indispensable to their proper elucidation and publication.

Our own continent, the physical features and meteorological phenomena of which are but partially known to men of science, and imperfectly understood by the public, will claim the leading place in the *JOURNAL*. Very inadequate means of information exist in reference to the internal commerce of the country, notwithstanding the wonderful provision made for its accommodation, both by nature and art. Only a few straggling returns are to be obtained of its direction, magnitude, or value. A work neglected by government must be performed by individuals, or left undone. Perhaps it is well to leave it in hands of persons who are attracted to such subjects by a taste for their investigation, and who are without bias from interest, or from personal or party associations.

Of the nature of the subjects to be treated upon, some idea may be formed from the contents of the first numbers. The editorial duties have been confided to a Committee of the Council, whose labors will be purely gratuitous. The Committee can only promise to exert themselves to make the *JOURNAL* useful, instructive, and entertaining. They respectfully solicit from their fellow members such aid as their opportunities for observation and investigation may enable them to render.

NEW YORK, January, 1859.